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MR. GAMBLE'S SPEECH

ON THE

COMMERCIAL POLICY OF THE COUNTRY,

IN THE

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1852.

Mr. Gamble congratulated the hon. Inspector General upon the rapid progress he was making towards protection principles, as regarded the commercial policy of the country. He had that night made admissions, and repeated them over and over again, so that there might be no misunderstanding, and which admissions he had only to follow out to their legitimate conclusions to become a sound protectionist. He had declared that "it was idle to lay down general rules and apply them in every case"—that the farmers of Canada were on a worse footing than the farmers of the United States—and that the consumers in the United States, who were producers of other articles, were in a better position than the producers of similar articles in Canada—and that that superiority of position was the consequence of the protection which they enjoyed." Now that application of general rules, often inadequately supported by experience, and a love of reducing everything to system, was the fertile source of error with the free trade theories, and therefore the admission of the hon. Inspector General—that it was idle to lay down general rules, and apply them in every case—amounted virtually to a surrender of the outwork of the whole position. He (Mr. G.) heartily concurred in the truth of the admissions made by the hon. gentleman, but there the concurrence ended, for he was utterly opposed to the retaliatory policy the hon. gentleman had declared the Government were determined to carry out. The question now under consideration was unquestionably the most important one upon which Parliament had deliberated during the present session; it affected, in a greater or less degree, every interest of our country—every class of our community, whether producer, fashioner or exchanger, or in common parlance, farmer, mechanic or merchant, and every individual in each class—yes, even that numerous body of men belonging to the learned professions, whose entire income is derived from the producing classes. Standing there as an humble advocate for his country's industry, he felt the responsibility which attached to him as a member of the Legislature, and deeply lamented the want of that mental capacity which alone could enable him to place before the House those great truths, those great facts which bear upon this question, with the perspicuity and force necessary to exhibit to the people of this country how intimately this question is connected with their welfare, with their growth in wealth, greatness and power.

He regretted not having been present in his place when the hon. member for Montreal had explained to the House his reasons for leaving the administration, because upon that occasion, if the statements made in the newspapers were true, the honourable Inspector General had gone more into the details of the proposed retaliatory policy than he had thought proper to do, during any of the subsequent discussions that had taken place. He had upon that occasion mentioned particular articles, and if he (Mr. G.) mistook not, particular rates to which certain duties were to be reduced; to-night he had only mentioned the article of sugar. The Government, however, were fully committed to the principle of a retaliatory policy; "they were determined upon it" were the words of the honourable Inspector General. Now in that policy he could not concur, neither could he assent to the resolution now before the Committee. He would therefore move an amendment to the following effect:—

"Resolved—That it is expedient to revise the duties now imposed upon goods, wares, and merchandise imported into this Province, in order that the Revenue derivable therefrom may be raised in such a manner as to foster and encourage those branches of native industry, for which this country possesses natural advantages."

In conversing with many persons upon this question, he found an erroneous impression very prevalent, viz: that a retaliatory policy was equivalent, or, in fact, the same thing with a protective policy. The former, indeed, would to a certain extent, so far as importations from the United States were concerned, be protective; nevertheless, as he proposed to show, it left the great evil untouched—in fact, by partially re-enacting the differential duties, it renewed the system which had prevailed from the first conquest of Canada, and which, he believed, had been highly prejudicial to Canadian interests. It was proposed to re-enact, to a certain extent, those differential duties, which would necessarily be confined to the direct trade with the United States, for the purpose of forcing the up trade back into the channel of the St. Lawrence; thus its operation was limited to the commerce with the United States. Then that policy had a declared definite object—the coercing the United States to grant us reciprocity—and that object attained, it would of course end. Now, what in truth is this much coveted reciprocity?

Divested of the sophisms with which its advocates surround it, the boon, for boon it would be, is the free admission of our raw productions into the markets which the people of the United States, by their protective tariff, have created for themselves, and that without subjecting ourselves to any portion of the burthens by which these markets were sustained—a most disinterested and generous proposition on our part certainly, and its rejection loudly calls for vindictive measures! This continual whining for reciprocity upon our bended knees was utterly contemptible. Had not the people of the United States a perfect right to regulate their commerce as they deemed most for their advantage, without our being offended at it? Are we so blind as not to see that granting what we desire would be contrary to their national policy? Did not we, all of us, perfectly understand the aggrandizing spirit that pervades the great mass of that people, who fondly believe that Canada's becoming a portion of their republic was only a question of time; who anticipated we should drop, like a ripe plum, into their bosom? With such a view, is it not their interest and wisdom to keep prominently before the eyes of our people the supposed disadvantages arising from our colonial position? If we could change places with the people of the United States, to-morrow, would not that be our policy? The hon Inspector General had repeated, for the nine hundred and ninety-ninth time, that Reciprocity had never been negatived by Congress; that it had received the sanction of the House of Representatives, and only failed in the Senate, from having been delayed by unforeseen circumstances; and it was sure to be obtained some time or other, either by diplomacy or in some other way. Now, the particular way in which the hon gentleman thought it was to be obtained was by shewing the Americans, who, he said, were noted for their close dealing, and would part with nothing without an equivalent, the value of our trade, by imposing restrictions; that was the course to pursue with them: and thus the hon gentleman would get his heart's desire at last. He reminded him of a spoiled child crying for the moon. He (Mr G) felt it his duty to oppose this favourite measure of the hon gentleman's, not only because he was not prepared to sacrifice the whole commercial interest of Canada West, to build up Montreal,—an interest the hon gentleman had thought fit to designate, as *moved by the most paltry and selfish motives*; a designation for which the Upper Canada merchants would doubtless feel grateful to the hon gentleman, who, they well knew never was governed by paltry or selfish motives himself; but he was opposed to the measure upon provincial grounds; it was unwise in a national point of view. It was a matter of notoriety, that our people engaged in the fisheries were decidedly placed in a less advantageous position than those of like occupation in the United States, arising from the system of bounties extended by their government to the latter; that fact had been freely admitted this session from all sides of the House. The hon Inspector General had that night himself admitted that our farmers and mechanics were in a similar position, as com-

pared with the agriculturists and mechanics of the Union—and that, because of their protective tariff. Now, we all knew that the large majority of commercial men in Montreal had openly declared, a few years ago, in favour of Annexation. Was it then wise, with these facts before our eyes, to adopt a policy highly injurious to the interests of the commercial classes in Canada West, and to cause them to feel that their material interests would be benefitted by joining the Union? He declared that if he was an annexationist, that would just be the policy he should desire to see carried out. If it accomplished anything, it would accomplish that; it was a miserable fallacy to suppose it would obtain the object for which the hon Inspector General advocated it; on the contrary, the first effect would be to stimulate the Americans to proceed with the enlargement of the Erie Canal. The people of Buffalo, he was told, were in ecstasies at the announcement of the hon gentleman's policy; and the only rational conclusion that he could arrive at was the probability of the loss of that portion of the American trade we now enjoy, should that hon gentleman's views be adopted by the House.

The resolution he was about to propose in amendment had a definite object, an end to be attained; that object was nothing less than to make the very revenue we were compelled to raise for the exigencies of the State foster and encourage our native industry: its operation is not proposed to be confined to goods imported from the United States, or from any other country singly, but to apply to all imports, come from where they may, or whatever their place of origin, with the single exception of our sister Colonies in America. That was the course that naturally suggested itself as proper and wise whenever the interests of Canada, irrespective of those of any other country, were consulted as a paramount consideration. The vote on the amendment would show the sense of the House and would be a test whether they were favourable to such a revision of our present tariff as would tend to foster and encourage our native industry—and whether they were prepared to adopt such a permanent policy as would stimulate industry and encourage manufactures. British and Canadian tariffs had never made that a primary object. Our first commercial regulations were imposed by the Imperial Parliament shortly after the Conquest; the 14th George the third was the first legislation upon the subject after Canada became British; a reference to that statute would show that its spirit and object was to promote British interests, not Canadian; it imposed the first differential duties for that purpose, and all subsequent British legislation was animated by the same spirit;—all articles not the production or growth of the United States were prohibited from entering Canada from that country. All productions of the United States that could compete with British productions were subjected to high duties, oil and the produce of the fisheries, for instance. Not satisfied with allowing the people of Great Britain thus to take care of themselves at our expense, we aided them as far as we could by our own legislation. British goods then entered

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mechanics of the protective tariff. A majority of companies declared, a taxation. Was it for our eyes, to the interests of the West, and to material interests of the Union? He decided, that would be to see carried out, it would be a fallacy to suppose which the honor; on the contrary, the Americans of the Erie Canal. He said, were in the honor gentleman's conclusion that the ability of the loss of trade we now enjoy, laws be adopted by

but to propose in fact, an end to be nothing less than we were compelled to state foster and encourage operation is not imported from the other country singly, from where they of origin, with the colonies in America, naturally suggested it over the interests of any other country, consideration. The show the sense of whether they were of our present tariff encourage our native were prepared to try as would stimulate manufactures. Britain never made that a commercial regulations Parliament shortly George the third was subject after Canada that statute would be to promote that it imposed the purpose, and all was animated by the the production or were prohibited from country. All products could compete with duties, for instance, the people of Great themselves at our expense as we could by our goods then entered

Canada upon the payment of a duty of 24 per cent. This system was adhered to, until it could no longer be enforced; in 1824 or 5 it was so far modified that tea was admitted to be imported from the United States, and it was abandoned by Great Britain at the repeal of the Corn Laws, as no longer attainable in that way. He contended that the whole object of this kind of legislation up to that period was the promotion of British interests, British manufactures, British commerce and British shipping—not Canadian interests, Canadian manufactures, Canadian commerce or Canadian shipping.

Our position and policy was but little different now; we impose high duties on articles we cannot produce, and a very low duty upon all those manufactured articles that we can make for ourselves, if we choose so to do—for instance, the duty on Tea is 18½ per cent. Coffee 21½ per cent, Manufactured Tobacco 23½ per cent, unmanufactured Tobacco 26 per cent, Coarse Sugar 51 per cent, Molasses 57 per cent, on manufactured goods 12½ per cent. Here it was worthy to notice the duty on Tobacco; a higher rate was absolutely charged upon that article when imported in leaf than when manufactured; notwithstanding, however, quite a little trade had sprung up in making segars &c., for he saw we now imported 1,000,000 of lbs. in leaf, and this he supposed was made up in addition to that grown in Canada, for he observed that the exports in that article only amounted to £15, while formerly a considerable quantity was exported. Then with regard to Refined Sugar, the duty imposed was nearly the same with that on coarse, 51 per cent, really as if we were determined to prevent any branch of industry springing up amongst us. Had the rate charged on coarse sugar been 10 or 15 per cent, in all probability we should ere this, have refined our own sugar. Here we see the object of this British Legislation; it is clearly manifest, to compel us to derive our supplies of clothing and other necessities from them, and thus encourage British Manufactures, British carrying trade and the employment of British capital. Its tendency is evidently to perpetuate the unjust and irreciprocal trade with her, and our colonial dependence as a consequence. He had lately seen some extracts from a work on political economy, published in the year 1750, one hundred years ago; it was styled—"The trade and navigation of Great Britain considered by Joshua Gee." It was a clue to the policy pursued to the then colonies, and he would shew that that policy had not been more widely departed from up to the present day than imperative necessity compelled. He would read those extracts to the Committee, and which were well worthy the attention of honourable members.

"1st. That manufactures in American Colonies should be discouraged or prohibited"

"Great Britain with its dependencies is doubtless as well able to subsist within itself as any nation in Europe. We have an enterprising people, fit for all the arts of peace or war. We have provisions in abundance, and those of the best sort, and we are able to raise sufficient for double the number of inhabitants. We have the very best

materials for clothing, and want nothing either for use or even for luxury, but what we have at home, or might have from our colonies; so that we might make such an intercourse of trade among ourselves, or between us and them, as would maintain a vast navigation. But we ought always to keep a watchful eye over our colonies, to restrain them from setting up any of the manufactures, which are carried on in Great Britain; and any such attempts should be crushed in the beginning, for if they are suffered to grow up to maturity it will be difficult to suppress them."

"Our colonies are much in the same state Ireland was in, when they began the woollen manufacture, and as their numbers increase will fall upon manufactures for clothing themselves, if due care be not taken to find employment for them, in raising such productions as may enable them to furnish themselves with all their necessities from us."

That was the object then, to adapt the wealth of the colonists to the supply required by their necessities, and to draw that supply from Great Britain. Now according to Lord Grey's celebrated dispatch, the policy is to be reversed and we must continue to import our necessities from Great Britain, to enable them to purchase food and timber from us.

"I should therefore, think it worthy the care of the Government, to endeavour by all possible means to encourage them in the raising of silk, hemp, flax, iron, (only pig, to be hammered in England) potash, &c., by giving them competent bounties in the beginning, and sending over skillful and judicious persons, at the public charge, to assist and instruct them in the most proper methods of management, which in my apprehension would lay a foundation for establishing the most profitable trade of any we have. And, considering the commanding situation of our colonies, along the sea coast; the great convenience of navigable rivers in all of them; the cheapness of land and the easiness of raising provisions, great numbers of people would transport themselves thither, to settle upon such improvements. Now, as people have been filled with fears that the colonies, if encouraged to raise rough materials, would set up for themselves, a little regulation would be necessary. And as they will have the providing rough materials for themselves, a little regulation would remove all those jealousies out of the way. They have never thrown or wove any silk as yet, that we have heard of. Therefore if a law was made prohibiting the use of any throwster's mill, of doubling or horsing silk, with any machine whatever, they would then send it to us raw. And as they will have the providing rough materials to themselves, so shall we have the manufacturing of them. If encouragement be given for raising hemp, flax, &c., doubtless they will soon begin to manufacture, if not prevented. Therefore to stop the progress of any such manufacture, it is proposed that no weaver have liberty to set up any looms, without first registering at an office kept for that purpose, and the name and place of abode of any journeyman that shall work with him. But if any particular inhabitant shall be inclined to have any

linen or woollen made of their own spinning, they should not be abridged of the same liberty that they now make use of, namely to carry a weaver who shall be licensed by the Governor, and have it wrought up for the use of the family, but not to be sold to any person in a private manner, nor exposed to any market or fair, upon pain of forfeiture."

"That all spinning mills and engines for drawing wire, or weaving stockings, be put down." "That all negroes shall be prohibited from weaving either linen or woollen or spinning or combing of wool, or working at any manufacture of iron, further than making it into pig or bar iron. That they also be prohibited from manufacturing hats, stockings or leather of any kind. This limitation will not abridge the planters of any liberty they now enjoy. On the contrary it will then turn their industry to promoting and raising these rough materials."

"2nd The advantages to Great Britain from keeping the colonies dependant on her for their essential supplies."

"If we examine into the circumstances of the inhabitants of our plantations and our own, it will appear that not one fourth part of their product redounds to their own profit, for out of all that comes here, they only carry back clothing and other accommodations for their families, all of which is of the merchandize and manufacture of this kingdom."

"All these advantages we receive by the plantations, besides the mortgages on the planters' estates, and the high interest they pay us, which is very considerable, and therefore very great care ought to be taken, in regulating all the affairs of the Colonists, that the planters are not put under too many difficulties, but encouraged to go on cheerfully."

"New England and the Northern Colonies have not commodities and products enough to send us in return for purchasing their necessary clothing, but are under very great difficulties; and therefore any ordinary sort sell with them, and when they have grown out of fashion with us, they are new fashioned enough for them."

Now, if Canada be substituted for New England in the last extract, Joshua Gee's remarks are just as applicable as they were 100 years ago. What purchaser of goods in England, when examining the contents of their warehouses, has not been asked, For what market are you purchasing? Canada. Oh, Canada—step this way, and here are goods better suited to your market, at half the price. Yes, true it is, their old shopkeepers, their refuse stock, are good enough for Canadians, and when they are out of fashion in England they are new enough fashioned for us. The fact is, they know little about us in England, and care less; witness the total abandonment of our interest on the repeal of the corn laws. It has been repeatedly stated in this house, and with great truth, that one word previous to that repeal would have insured us free ingress for our raw products into the markets of the United States; one single clause retained in the Navigation laws, (its repeal of no consequence to them) would have insured to this city the largest shipbuilding trade in the world. Our interests were too contemptible to be remem-

bered; that one word was not spoken—that clause was repealed. Twelve months after the repeal of the Corn laws we were permitted to repeal the differential duties, now declared by the Hon. Inspector General to have been a false step. Was that overlooked in England? Oh, no; Lord Grey, almost in the words of Joshua Gee, tells us what we should do. Mr. G. then read from the despatch as follows:—"In advising the Queen to assent to Act No. 479, which has been passed for the twofold purpose of repealing the Differential Duties of Customs, payable under the Possessions Act, and for a new tariff of Custom duties, her Majesty's Government were not unmindful of the objections which would probably be urged by the manufacturers and others in this country to the increased rates of import duty to which many articles of British manufacture are made liable. But aware of the importance attached by the Provincial Government to an early decision on the act, and that the Colonial revenue for the present year was in a great measure dependent on the duties to be levied under this tariff, we were unwilling to offer any impediment to the Act receiving Her Majesty's sanction, preferring to leave these objections to be considered and dealt with by the Provincial Legislature."

"The duties more particularly complained of are those imposed on leather and leathern manufactures, on paper, on the staple manufactures of cotton, linen, woollen, hardware, and on some specific articles, such as silk dresses, scythes and axes."

"Her Majesty's Government acknowledge readily the propriety of leaving to the Colonists the task of raising the revenue which they may require by such methods of taxation as may appear to them most expedient; and in the present case we disclaim any wish to interfere with their liberty of action in this respect for the sake of protecting the exclusive interest of the British manufacturer. But it, as has been alleged by the complainants, and as in some instances would appear to be the case, any of the duties comprised in the tariff have been imposed, not for purposes of revenue, but with the view of protecting the interests of the Canadian manufacturer. Her Majesty's Government are clearly of opinion that such a course is injurious alike to the interests of the mother country and to those of the colony. Canada possesses natural advantages for the production of articles which will always exchange in the markets of this country for these manufactured goods of which she stands in need. By such exchange she will obtain those goods much more cheaply than she would manufacture them for herself, and she will secure an advantageous market for the raw produce, which she is best able to raise. On the other hand, by closing her markets against British manufactures, or rendering their introduction more costly, she enhances their price to the consumer, and by the imposition of protective duties, for the purpose of fostering an unnatural trade, she gives a wrong direction to capital, by withdrawing it from more profitable employment and causing it to be invested in the manufacture of articles which might be imported at a cost below that of production in the colony; while at the same time she inflicts

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blow on her export trade by rendering her market
less eligible to the British customer.

"If the merchant finds that by exporting his
goods to Canada they produce him in return a large
quantity of corn, and thus yield a greater profit
than they would if exported to any other country,
he will of course give the preference to Canada.
But if, by reason of increased import duties, those
goods produce a diminished return, the result will
be, either that the Canadian farmer must submit
to a proportionate reduction in the price of his pro-
duce, or the British manufacturer must resort to
another market. It is therefore obvious, that it
is not less the interest of Canada herself than of
Great Britain, that this tariff of import duties
should undergo a careful revision."

An opinion in which Mr. G. perfectly agreed with
his lordship, that our tariff should undergo a careful
revision, but for a very different purpose and very
different object from that desired by his lordship
who, with Joshua Gee, was keen for having the
raw produce, a large quantity of corn, not one-
fourth part of which should redound to our own
profit, because paid for in cheap manufactured
articles, of any ordinary sort, old fashioned with
them, but new fashioned enough for us. The ob-
ject of all this is manifest to persuade us now that
resort can no longer be had to force, to adopt free
trade theories and continue the old system of com-
mercial legislation, by which England would re-
tain the more profitable employment of manufac-
turing, for the industry of her people, at the expense
of the industry of the people of Canada, who would
thus be compelled to follow the less profitable
business of producing the rough or raw material,—
bulky articles, bulky in proportion to their value,
to be carried in her ships at the cost of the Cana-
dian producer. The object of England is to per-
suade the world, by these free trade sophistries,
this specious reasoning, to admit her manufactures
at low import duties; and wherever that has suc-
ceeded, as in Canada, native industry is invariably
driven by the force of her manufacturing superior-
ity to those employments that are least remunera-
ting. The free trade theory not only pervades
her despatches, her diplomacy, her works on po-
litical economy, but works of light literature are
filled with it. He had noticed, among others,
Warburton's *Hochelaga*, in which, speaking of
Lowell and the manufacturing towns in New Eng-
land, the author says, "The establishment of any
sort of manufacturing industry here, from shoes
upwards, appears to me an error. The men so
employed could get higher wages in the agricul-
tural labors of the west, where they would be free
from the danger of contamination in crowded
cities. If the English corn laws be materially
relaxed, the cultivation of these grain growing
districts will be still more profitable; while by a
removal of the American prohibitory duties, all
articles of clothing could be obtained at one-third
less price than that now exacted, and paid for in
food to England. Without giving an opinion on
the advantages of free trade for ourselves, I can-
not see the possible cause of its being denied to
the people of the United States, where there is no
vital interest to be endangered, no great mass of

people or capital to be put out of employment;
for who can doubt that a few months would absorb
the scanty manufacturing population of New Eng-
land among the millions of new states, and that in
all probability their condition would be much im-
proved? I have said before, that they can, in some
cases close, rival the English factories; but
why should they try, when they would be
so much better off elsewhere. How wonderfully
kind this desire to improve the condition of the man-
ufacturing population in America, and prevent their
moral from being contaminated by sending them
to till the earth in the far west. How disinterested,
how philanthropical on the part of the English
manufacturer. The veil here is too thin to conceal
the object and intent of all this. English legisla-
tors understand it well. Hear Mr. Robinson, when
arguing against the violation of the Methuen treaty,
a treaty fatal to Portugal, as the same system, if
continued here, will be injurious, if not fatal, to our
industry: "It was idle for us to endeavour to per-
suade other nations to join with us in adopting the
principles of what was called 'free trade'—other
nations knew as well as the noble lord opposite and
those who acted with him, what we meant by free
trade was nothing more nor less than, by means of
the great advantages we enjoyed, to get a monopoly
of all their markets for our manufacturers, and to
prevent them one and all from ever becoming man-
ufacturing nations. When the system of recipro-
city and free trade had been proposed to a French
ambassador, his remark was, that the plan was
excellent in theory, but to make it fair in practice
it would be necessary to defer the attempt to put it
in execution for half a century, until France should
be upon the same footing with Great Britain—in
marine, in manufacture, in capital, and the many
other peculiar advantages which it now enjoyed.
The policy that France acted on was, that of en-
couraging its native manufactures, and it was a
wise policy, because if it were freely to admit our
manufactures, it would speedily be reduced to the
rank of an agricultural nation; and, therefore, a
poor nation, as all must be that depend exclusively
on agriculture." Here, then, the result is to be ob-
tained by England from inculcating free trade theo-
ries stands revealed, and so all we profit by the
revelation! The object of British legislation in our
commercial affairs has been to build up British
interests, not Canadian, and thus perpetuate our
dependence upon them for all manufactured arti-
cles of the first necessity. That object has thus far
been fully attained. With every natural facility,
and the bounties of nature strewn around us in the
utmost profusion, with the elements of wealth on
every hand, we are still but an agricultural people,
and therefore, as Mr. Robinson says, a poor people
—without manufactures, without railroads, and
without ourselves possessing the means wherewith
to build them. No wonder we are obliged to have
recourse to English capitalists and English con-
tractors for our contemplated Trunk Line, and
obliged, if built at all, to construct it at double the
expense it otherwise would cost. Those who are
dependant on England for their clothing, and knives
and forks, and spoons, must also necessarily be
dependant upon her for their railroads. He had

already trespassed upon the Committee by the long extracts that had been quoted, but he felt that he must venture upon one or two more even at the risk of being tedious. The subject was far too important to be lightly treated—it was our duty to obtain all the information, and the best opinions within our reach, before adopting the proposed policy of the Government, and which he fervently hoped would not receive the sanction of the House. He would now read to the Committee statements of no mean authority—the pamphlet he held in his hand was the work of Judge Sullivan, a lecture delivered by that learned gentleman before the Mechanics' Institute at Hamilton, and which, in his opinion, would remain a monument of his judgment, talent and research long after his judicial labours have been forgotten; that lecture required only to be known to be appreciated by the public, who would then hail its author as the benefactor of his country.

"Let us take, for instance, the Fur Trade, the first source of wealth that invited adventurers from Europe into this part of America. The trade was important enough to cause the formation of two colossal English Companies, and in the prosecution of it vast sums were realized; but nevertheless it has been of no real use to Canada. The adventurers did not become citizens of the country in which many of them lived and died; the profits of their enterprise were realized at a distance, or were remitted thither. Those who became, by that means, possessed of wealth, looked to a home and friends beyond the Atlantic. No capital realized by that trade remains with us; no men like the American John Jacob Astor; no settlements, no towns, no churches, no colleges, no manufactures, not a road, or a bridge, or a building; the only results of by far the greatest Fur Trade in America, except the North-west House in Lachine, and the ruined village of Queenston. Such are the remaining fruits of a commerce carried on for nearly a century, by which millions of pounds sterling, in profits, have been realized. Had these been realized for, as well as in, Canada; had they been, or were they now available, in addition to other resources, I leave it to you to calculate, and consider what the consequences would and must have been to our present condition."

"Our next greatest branch of commerce has been the Timber Trade—a little more connected with the country than the Fur Trade; it has been somewhat more beneficial; but its seat was in remote and unsettled territory. The persons engaged were, and are, separated from the other population. The capital employed was not Canadian. The trade is not of the country; a very small portion of the profits only remained, or can remain in Canada. Few merchants belonging to Canada have been enriched by it. It employs probably a thousand large ships, of which not one-twentieth are owned on this side of the Atlantic; yet this is a commerce carried on by the native wealth of the country. Its benefits to the Mother Country have been questioned, on grounds of which I am unable to judge. If, with my limited opportunities, I should venture an opinion, it would probably not concur with the present opinion entertained in England,

by those who have all the materials of calculation at hand; but to this Province I am able to say, that in proportion to its magnitude, the Timber Trade has been of little advantage. The ships of the great house of Gilmour & Co., may, from their present number of four hundred, be increased to a thousand, without making a town in Canada, the tenth part of the size of Rochester or Pittsburgh, and they may all be sunk into the sea, without causing even an underwriter in Canada to look for his pocket handkerchief."

"We now come to the product and exportation of Wheat and Flour, almost our only resource, arising from our own labour and enterprise." The settlers in Upper Canada were the U. E. Loyalists, and soldiers of the American revolutionary war; they became simple agriculturists, as did also the great body of the Immigrants who followed them. The first importations were paid for, out of the expenditure of the Home Government. At length an export trade in wheat arose, which has hitherto been going on, steadily increasing; but this and the Government expenditure did not nearly suffice to pay for the importations. The country became involved in mortgages, debts, and law suits, from which the money brought in yearly by settlers helped to redeem it; for many, very many years, the people of this country manufactured nothing for themselves; and up to this day articles of the coarsest and most simple fabric, and in the most common use, are brought in ready-made in vast quantities. According to the course of events, as they have been, the profits of the manufactures consumed in this Province, have accumulated in England. The profits of exportation and transport have enriched England. They have realized profits in the country, but the results have been sent away, and when we look for the means of carrying on the enterprise and improvement necessary to the country, they are not to be found amongst ourselves."

"When I was first called to the bar, not thinking that I had sufficient talents or confidence to cope with the difficulties of a town practice, I went to reside in one of the most retired and quiet neighborhoods in the Province, in the vicinity of Long Point, and just at the same time Messrs. Capron and Van Norman established a small foundry near Vittoria. Bog ore, as it is called, lay upon the land, and there it might have been to this hour, for anything that the Long Point farmers knew or cared. Yet there never were a people more puzzled for the means to buy a sugar or a potash kettle, or a pot to boil their potatoes. The long store account, with interest and costs, and sheriff's poundage, and costs of writ, and costs of travelling, and all other incidental expenses, were well understood. The people were the kindest and the most hospitable in the world—to call at a farmer's house at any hour of the day, and not to eat or drink, was to be proud and unneighbourly, and if you paid four pence for a letter at the post office, you might take sixpence of the money out in old Long Point whiskey, at the generous hands of the Postmaster. But there was no money. Wheat was worth three York shillings a bushel in trade, and in such trade! Tea at ten shillings a pound, factory cotton three York shillings a yard, and other things in

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proportion. How the farmers ever paid their ac-
counts, or the storekeepers their bills, I did not
remain long enough to learn. But the foundry
was established, and Capron and Van Norman
bought horses and other articles in exchange for
hollow-ware and stoves, or when these were not
immediately wanted, a credit on the foundry, pay-
able in that cast-iron currency. Then the farmers,
when they wanted a raise, hauled ore to the foundry,
or they made charcoal, or they sold a horse
or two; they then had not only their staves and
hollow-ware articles of pecuniary importance
cheap and abundant, but they had a credit at the
iron bank, which passed current. One of my first
fees was an order on the furnace, with which I
built a chimney, and learned a lesson worth more
than ten dollars' worth of hollow-ware; namely,
the vast importance to the whole community of
that single manufacturing establishment. I asked
myself what would be the difference if Capron
and Van Norman had been peddlers of iron pots,
instead of manufacturers; had the hollow-ware
been made at the other side of Lake Erie; and I
could not but see that the distinctions were these:
Possibly hollow-ware might have been as cheap
one way as the other, but then the profits of the
price of the ore enriched the land owner, its car-
riage enriched the teamster, its smelting gave a
value to charcoal, and when made into kettles, it
enabled the manufacturers to buy horses. The
manufacturers themselves became wealthy, the
men they employed purchased food from the farm-
ers, and clothes from the storekeepers. They
saved money and became land-owners. They
had families and they made a village. Village lots
became worth money."

"Take up any advertisement from a newspaper,
and read it; ask yourselves, are we belonging to the
same nation; are our people the same as the all
enterprising, and all successful monopolizers of
Great Britain? For example, one man advertises
his stock in trade as imported direct from Sheffield,
Birmingham, Wolverhampton, and New York;
English Banks', Russia and Swedes iron, cast steel,
blister, spring, and German ditto, copper, Canada
plates, and sheet iron; bar lead, sheet ditto, anvils,
vices, sledges, and hammers, chains, nails and
spikes; joiners and carpenters' tools; hand, cross-
cut, circular and Philadelphia saws; saddlery
mountings, and carriage trimmings, patent axles,
and patent leather; spades, shovels, forks, hoes,
and ploughs; cooking stoves, parlor, Dundee,
and Three Rivers ditto, hollow-ware, tea kettles,
saucepans, stew pans, and gridirons, and some of
these articles may, without particular remark,
be imported any where; but look at the
majority of them, and they give you the idea of
some semi-barbarous and helpless country, inhabi-
ted by some simple and uninformed people, who,
wanting ingenuity and enterprise to make and
manufacture for themselves, must send abroad for
the most necessary and common articles of con-
sumption. Who would believe, that in many parts
of Canada we have iron ore of the finest quality,
without the trouble of subterraneous mining?—
and when he knows that the superiority of the
Russian and Swedish, and German iron and steel,

arises from the use of charcoal, which cannot be
used in quantity in England. Who that reads that
advertisement, would believe that this is a country,
five-sixths of which are covered with forest, the
wood of which is of no value except for the very
purpose for which it is not used? Again, it is not
true, that the establishment of manufactures
amongst us would detach our population from agri-
cultural pursuits. Since the first settlement of the
Province, tens of thousands of citizens have passed
through, because they could find no employment
in their trades; and tens of thousands have been
deterred from coming here from the same cause.—
The people who would be employed in manufac-
tures are not here; but a single letter would bring
as many of them as you want. They are more
easily procured than imported goods; for they
would require neither discount nor duties, nor
money; and so far from taking from the agricultu-
ral population, it is as manifest as that one and one
make two, that without them, and without the
towns which they would inhabit, we never can
have an agricultural population thickly settled, or
really rich and flourishing. The English or French
gentleman who travels in America, were he only
to come to Canada, and were he to enquire
into its progress only, he would admire the fer-
tility of the soil, the comfort of the farming
population, in comparison with the peasantry of
Europe; he would be delighted to see cities like
Montreal, and Toronto, and Hamilton; and he
would be surprised that such places should have
sprung up in so short a time. He would also ad-
mire the shops, so full of goods, and congratu-
late himself on the pleasing fact, that unless among
strangers and new-comers, there was no such thing
as abject poverty. He crosses the line into the
United States, a country very like ours but not so
fertile; he finds land four times the value it is
with us; for one town of ours he finds three in the
same distance. He had seen our streams brawling
through the solitary forest. In the neighboring
country, the deep rumbling of wheels, and the
heavy fall of the hammer, and the hum of a busy
population, are added to the music of the waters.
In Canada he has speculated what a country might
be; he has gone but a few miles, and he discovers
what Canada might be by finding what the Ameri-
can territory really is. The American visits his
Canadian neighbors on a tour of pleasure; or,
perhaps, to sell his clocks, or his rakes, or his
tomb-stones—for, strange to say, so infatuated are
our people with foreign luxuries, that they cannot
be buried without the assurance of a ghostly mile-
stone of dirty white, imported all the way from the
State of Maine, standing over their graves, looking
like a bad imitation of a badly painted two-inch
board. Well, he comes into Canada, and is per-
fectly astonished to find such natural capabilities
—"privileges," as he very significantly calls them.
Why, he asks, is there not a paper mill here,
and a woollen factory there, and a trip hammer on
that stream, and a pail factory at that fall, and a
town on this location—and this—and this—and
this. He brings his hemp from Ohio to sell, under
the firm belief that it will not grow to the north
of the line; and he finds it overtopping his head,

in the lanes and behind the barns—a weed which the farmers cannot keep from growing.”

“I cannot be brought, on the other hand, to admit that temporary encouragement in the way of protecting duties may not wisely be afforded to well chosen fabrics which we are capable of making ourselves, but which we have delayed making, until competition even at a distance is more than we can easily overcome.”

“I do not know what is good or bad for England, in the way of protection, or of free trade.— But I do know that if the boots and shoes made by fifty tradesmen in Toronto were supplanted in the market by a like quantity of shoes and boots made in the State Prisons at Auburn, Toronto would lose two hundred of her citizens, who build houses, pay taxes, make money, and keep it, and that the farmer would lose so much of a market for every kind of produce; I should lose myself more fees than would pay for all the boots and shoes used in my family. House rent would be affected in proportion to the diminution in the number of tenants; town lots would fall in price in proportion to the number of purchasers; there would be fifty men less for the defence of the city, in case she required it; and the accumulation of profit from the industry of these fifty citizens would be lost to the long future. My own feelings would lead me to regret, even if we got the imported shoes for nothing; but, reasoning strictly, it would be a question of degree;—fifty per cent, might be too much and five per cent, not too much to pay for the privilege of having our own shoemakers, if it were necessary to pay for it at all. I should not be disposed to weigh the matter too strictly: a York sixpence or a York shilling would never lead me to banish my fellow townsmen.”

That was a true picture of the position of Canada five years ago. Since then, it was somewhat modified, but in the main it was a true picture still. Such had been the commercial legislation for Canada, if it deserved that name. The fact was, the progress of Canada had been far behind that of the United States, her members, who styled those who believed on the evidence of their senses, in opposition to erroneous statistics, that such was the fact—the ruin and decay party—had themselves admitted; yes, the hon member from Montreal, the mover of the resolutions before the committee, had that night himself admitted that the progress of Canada had not been such as its great natural advantages ought to have produced. Such

was the truth; it could neither be denied nor corrected. Many persons falsely attributed this our tardy progress to some fancied superiority in American institutions over our own. That was not the cause; our institutions were just as free; and there was nothing in them to prevent Canada's being foremost in the race. The true cause was to be found in the commercial policy that had been pursued, from the very settlement of Canada to the present moment. Look at the United States, and behold the effects of American legislation fostering and encouraging American industry. Look at Canada, and behold Canadian legislation fostering and encouraging British industry, not Canadian; that is the whole secret—the reason that Canada is nearly distanced by her better protected neighbour, who understands her true interests, and is governed in accordance therewith, while Canada had been governed for British interests, and British interests only. He would ask if this mismanagement is to be suffered to continue;—the remedy, he believed, was in our own hands, or our own power, if we would but exercise it;—that remedy, he believed, was such a revision of the tariff that the revenue raised by import duties might be arranged to foster and encourage our industry. Repeal the duties on tea, coffee, sugar, tobacco, and molasses,—articles that never can be produced here,—do away with the high impost upon them; relieve our agricultural population from that burden; those duties amounted to £183,000; and in their stead levy an additional duty of 7½ per cent, on the manufactures of woolen, cotton, linen, silk, iron, &c., imported, no matter from what quarter, into Canada; that would make 20 per cent, in all, not too high a rate to be permanent; and that he considered of great consequence. Nothing done—trade more than continual change; the duty on these manufactures would amount to that obtained from the five articles he had mentioned, and to some £25,000 to £30,000 more. He was prepared with details to show that this could be done with advantage to the revenue, but the hour reminded him that he had already occupied the time of the Committee too long, and he would therefore only say, that seeing a revenue must be had, no sound reason could be advanced why it should not be levied on those articles, for the manufacture of which our country possesses natural facilities, and in the manner stated in the amendment he now moved.

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